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ABSTRACT

Designed to help school administrators and board members promote instructional excellence, this publication reports survey results involving over 35 school districts in Northern California, Utah, and Nevada engaged in instructional improvement efforts. Specifically, the report describes alternative strategies used to organize and manage three important instructional functions--curriculum, staff development, and supervision and evaluation. The first chapter considers issues related to managing and implementing new curricula. Curriculum reforms are not accomplished without conflict and resistance, often partially resolved by teacher and principal turnover. To "sell" the reforms requires staff education and training and a cautious implementation approach. Chapter 2 discusses issues and concerns related to staff-driven and standardized staff development programs. One difficulty, besides scarce resources, is the determination of the districts to separate development and evaluation functions. The third chapter treats evaluation and supervision, focusing on two major areas: testing programs and supervision and evaluation procedures. The report recommends careful development of criterion-referenced tests and thorough training of staff members using them. Problems with testing programs and supervision and evaluation systems are thoroughly discussed. Administrators' tendency to rely on formative, rather than summative, evaluation is noted. Appended is a directory of participating school districts. (MLH)

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Instructional Management Program

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Pathways to Excellence:
How School Districts Can Improve Instruction

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September, 1984

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INTRODUCTION

Today, the improvement of instruction in public schools is a national priority. Over the past few years, nearly thirty reports on the condition of education have been published, and educational reform has become a major issue among politicians, professional educators and the public. As a result, the opportunity for initiating significant school improvement efforts has never been greater.

The Purpose of This Publication

This publication is designed to help educational administrators and school board members promote instructional excellence in their school districts.

In the following pages, we report the results of a survey of over 35 school districts in the Far West Laboratory's region. Each of these districts has taken significant steps over the past few years to improve instruction in schools. The survey was designed to elicit information from administrative personnel in these districts on the specific strategies used to make district-wide instructional improvements. In the following pages:

- We describe the alternative strategies used by districts to organize and manage three important instructional functions in school districts--curriculum, staff development, and supervision and evaluation.
- We also provide a list of the educators who discussed district improvement projects with us. This list, included as Appendix A, allows readers to obtain further information on these projects from the professional educators who served as our respondents.

The Sample

The Regional Survey was conducted between October and June of the 1983-84 school year. School districts in Northern California, Nevada and Utah were selected for participation in the survey using a technique known as "snowball" sampling. We began by contacting professors of education, personnel in state and county education offices, and staff members at the Far West Laboratory (FWL). We asked these individuals to nominate school districts that were

engaged in significant programs of instructional improvement. We then contacted the superintendent of the nominated districts, briefly discussed aspects of their improvement program, and asked them to participate in the survey. We also asked superintendents to nominate other school districts engaged in significant programs of instructional improvement. Using this chain-referral procedure, we obtained a sample of 39 school districts.

Given limited time and resources, we could not contact every school district in the FWL region that was engaged in instructional improvement programs. Thus, many exemplary school districts could not be included in our study. However, the chain-referral procedure did lead us to contact every school district in our region that had a relevant program listed in the NDN publication, Educational Programs That Work, and to contact all school superintendents in the FWL region who were members of the California State Department of Education's task force on effective schools. Thus, our sample includes a number of districts that have been very active in promoting instructional excellence.

Information Provided by Respondents

In each district in the sample, we conducted at least one telephone interview with a district administrator knowledgeable about the program of interest. In most cases we conducted two or three interviews. The interviews lasted between one and two hours, during which time we obtained a program description, information on the design, implementation and evaluation of the program, the relation of the program to other district activities, and program consequences. In five districts, the telephone interviews were supplemented with site visits in which we talked to principals and teachers. The interviews were for the most part lively and frank discussions of the promises and pitfalls associated with the implementation of district-wide improvement projects. For this we thank the professional educators who generously devoted their time to give researchers the benefits of their practical experiences.

How to Use This Report

The findings of this study are reported in the next three chapters. In each chapter, we discuss the concerns that led districts to reform their practices in a particular functional area (e.g., curriculum, staff development, supervision and evaluation), the types of programs they set up to address their concerns; the strategies they used to implement these programs; and the problems they encountered in implementing improvement efforts.

The chapters include a discussion of alternative "pathways" that school districts can take to improve instruction and a listing of the school districts that took these pathways. Thus, readers of this report can gain not only a brief description of various strategies of district-wide instructional improvement but also

can find out where in the Far West region these strategies have been tried.

To facilitate communication among districts in the FWL region, we have indexed school districts by letter/number combinations in the text. As we discuss particular strategies of improvement, we denote districts that have used these strategies as "C1," "N15," or "U22." Letters indicate the state a district is in, with "C" denoting a California school district, "N" a Nevada school district, and "U" a Utah school district. The numbers denote the specific district in each state. Appendix A lists the index numbers of school districts and the names and telephone numbers of our respondents in these districts.

PATHWAYS TO EXCELLENCE IN CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTIONAL MANAGEMENT

In this chapter, we use data from the regional survey to consider four issues related to the management and implementation of new curricula in school districts: (1) Why have districts become active in the design and implementation of new curricula? (2) What types of changes are districts making in their curricula? (3) How have districts implemented these changes? (4) What problems have districts experienced as they implemented these changes?

Concerns Leading to Curriculum Reform

Our data suggest that three kinds of concerns lead districts to make reforms in curriculum and instructional management.

Centralization and Standardization

Some districts in our sample initiated curriculum reform in response to a perceived lack of coherence or unity in the district-wide curriculum (C1,C11,N7,U7). In one district, for example, administrators had previously encouraged elementary schools to develop their own curricula, but they were now ready to implement a more standardized set of curriculum expectations (C1). In a second district, administrators were concerned about the traditional autonomy of departments in secondary schools, which they felt prevented the development of systematic district-wide curricula (C11). In a third district, administrators wanted to develop a coherent and articulated educational philosophy within the district but lacked a systematic process for doing so. This led to the development of district-level procedures for curriculum revision and implementation (U7). In each of these districts, the concern for centralization and standardization led to the development of new curriculum goals and objectives.

Accountability

Districts also embarked on curriculum reform as a response to pressures for accountability (C1,C7,N1,N7). Various constituencies were responsible for these pressures. In two districts, the state education agency initiated pressures for accountability (N1,N7). In others, local school boards and administrators wanted to develop systems that would clearly communicate the academic expectations and accomplishments of the district (C1,C7). Concerns for accountability led these districts to develop minimum competency requirements for students and criterion-referenced testing systems which could be used to communicate district and school expectations and accomplishments.

Low Student Achievement

A third set of districts initiated curriculum reforms in response to low student achievement, particularly on the part of disadvantaged students (C19,N1,U3,U4). In one district, for example, inspection of achievement test results revealed that many disadvantaged students were failing to acquire basic skills in the early grades. Because these skills were often not taught at later grades, many students tended to "fall through the cracks" (U4). To remedy such situations, districts in our sample not only embarked on systematic plans to clarify learning objectives and monitor the academic progress of students, they also coupled these curriculum reforms to instructional processes. For example, in two districts, curriculum reform was seen as a necessary supportive step in the development of "individualized" instructional strategies (U3,U4).

Discussion and Analysis

Our data indicate that districts engage in three types of strategies as they review and revise curricula: they develop new curriculum objectives, develop assessment instruments aligned to these objectives, and couple curriculum changes to new instructional strategies.

District strategies were partly a function of the concerns that led to curriculum reform. But there were also relations among types of strategies. For example, districts concerned with accountability often developed minimum competency tests or assessment instruments to monitor instructional outcomes. As they developed these tests, new concerns were raised, sometimes about student performance and sometimes about the overarching instructional goals of the district. This led them to pursue other reform strategies, for example, the development of new curriculum guides and/or instructional strategies (C7,N1). Similarly, districts that began with a concern for centralization developed new uniform curricula. Eventually, however, these districts saw the relationship between this strategy and teaching strategies or the development of assessment instruments (U7). Finally, districts that began by attempting to promote "individualized" or "mastery" instructional strategies within the district quickly saw the necessity of also developing instructional objectives and assessment instruments to support this instructional strategy (C19,U3,U4).

These trends suggest that curriculum reform needs to integrate the development of instructional objectives, assessment instruments, and instructional strategies into an overarching system of interrelated activities.

Types of Curriculum Reforms

Having outlined the concerns leading to curriculum reform, we are in a position to discuss the types of reform activities we observed.

Specifying Learning Objectives

One strategy of curriculum reform is the revision of curricular goals and objectives. At the elementary level, and in some high schools, this involved the development of new curriculum guides which stated broad goals in curriculum areas and then enumerated more specific instructional objectives. A second format was used exclusively at the secondary level. Here, rather than developing specific learning objectives, curricular goals were phrased in terms of course requirements.

Types of objectives: Districts that set instructional objectives used a variety of formats. In some districts, a set of objectives were singled out as minimum competencies (C1,C7,C19,N3). More common, however, was the development of "target" or "terminal" objectives for a particular grade level (C1,C7,C19,N1,N7,U3,U4). These defined the main instructional program of the district. Some districts were careful to note that these objectives applied not only to students in regular classrooms, but also to students in bilingual (C14) and special education programs as well (C19). Finally, one district developed "optional" objectives that could be used for enrichment activities at a particular grade level (C7).

Grade levels and topics: The use of specific instructional objectives was not limited to basic skills curricula in elementary schools. Although most districts in our sample began their reform efforts by revising scope and sequence charts at the elementary level, some districts moved beyond this limited domain and developed detailed scope and sequence charts for junior and senior high curricula as well (C7,C15,C19,N1,U4). Other districts developed detailed instructional objectives in subject areas such as health and physical education, art, and music (U3).

Developing Assessment Instruments

Curriculum alignment: A second aspect of curriculum reform is the development of "criterion-referenced" tests (CRTs) that assess whether or not a district's instructional objectives have been met. In the research literature, this activity is often called "curriculum alignment," a term which refers to the match between items in achievement tests and the specific instructional objectives defined in the curriculum.

A number of districts in our sample had engaged in curriculum alignment. While they continued to use standardized achievement tests, they also developed CRTs with items that more adequately sampled the instructional objectives embedded in their local scope and sequence charts (C19,N1,N7,U3,U4). Many districts used these

tests in much the same way as standardized achievement tests. For example, in one district, CRTs were administered in grades 3, 6, and 8 in order to monitor student achievement of district-level instructional objectives at important transition points in the curriculum (N7). In other districts, CRTs were administered at the end of the year to monitor the degree to which the objectives of the district instructional program were met (C1,N7).

Other districts attempted to use CRT results to structure the instruction students received. In one district, for example, a CRT was administered to all students at the beginning of the year and used to place students in instructional groups (N1). Districts also developed CRTs for use as pre- and post-tests for specific units of instruction in the district's scope and sequence chart (N1,U3,U4). These tests were used to diagnose student needs and readiness for instruction and to assess mastery of instructional objectives.

Computerized management information systems: In many districts, CRT performance data were incorporated into computerized instructional management systems (C1,C7,C19,N7,U4). The data generated by these systems could be analyzed at various levels of aggregation. All of the systems provided achievement data on individual students, and a printout could be obtained showing the particular instructional objectives a student had mastered during the academic year. Achievement data were also aggregated to provide information on the proportions of students who had mastered "target" objectives in classrooms, at particular grade levels within schools, or in the district as a whole.

In most districts in our survey, these data were controlled by the district office because the compilation of summary reports required the powerful capacity of the district's mainframe computer, and most districts had not yet been able to provide schools with terminals linked to this mainframe. However, some districts recognized that such centralization limited the flexibile use of information on the system and were moving toward the development of a distributed network of computer terminals in school buildings (C1,C7,C19,U4).

The data provided by such systems were used in various ways. Information on individual student achievement was used to make placements in instructional groups at the beginning of the school year (N1), to generate IEPs for students during the year (C19), and in periodic conferences with parents (C1,C19); information on classroom- and school-level performance was used mostly in quarterly or year-end assessments of the instructional program (C1,C19,N1,U4).

Links to Instruction

All districts consciously attempt to link curriculum reform to instruction in classrooms. In a later section, we discuss the strategies districts use to encourage implementation of new

curricula. In this section, however, we focus on three other aspects of curriculum reform that appear to affect instructional strategies.

Instructional materials: In a number of districts, curriculum reform was coupled to the selection of instructional materials, although the extent of coupling varied. At one end of the spectrum, a district that had recently revised its scope and sequence charts and developed CRTs for instructional units also developed a policy that allowed school personnel to choose instructional materials (U4). At the other end of the spectrum, a district that revised its scope and sequence charts adopted uniform textbook series for use in all schools (C1). A common midpoint on this spectrum of materials constraint is a policy that allows schools to choose among a limited set of district-approved textbook series (N7) or to use supplementary materials.

Instructional strategies: Districts also developed procedures to help teachers target instruction to specific curriculum objectives. For example, one district developed a computerized system that showed the pages in various texts that dealt with particular objectives (C19). This same district also used its computerized system to correlate curriculum objectives to Guilford's structure of intellect as an aid in the development of teaching strategies. Another district used its Teacher Center as a place where teachers could go to examine alternative materials and discuss strategies for teaching particular instructional objectives (U4). Finally, as we discuss in more detail in the next section, some districts provided extensive inservice training in how to use new materials or teach new instructional objectives (U3,U4,U7).

Analysis and Discussion

The goal of curriculum review and revision is to affect the instruction students receive. But it is interesting to ask if this goal is achieved. Most survey respondents recognized that revised scope and sequence charts were a necessary first step in curriculum reform, but few thought that such revisions assured implementation of new curricula. In the view of some respondents, revisions of scope and sequence charts were most useful to teachers unfamiliar with the objectives of instruction in a particular curriculum area, for example, beginning teachers or those who have been recently transferred (C7,U4).

To assure implementation, most districts engaged in one or another type of curriculum "alignment." In some districts, instructional materials were aligned to district curriculum objectives under the assumption that when teachers used materials with a high degree of "alignment," they were more likely to structure classroom activities around district objectives. Districts also aligned achievement tests to district objectives. By designing CRTs and using these at the end of the year to monitor instructional accomplishments, teachers were made aware of and held accountable for the attainment of district instructional objectives. For

example, in one district that developed CRTs and a computerized instructional management system, respondents noted that teachers were taking testing more seriously (N1), and in another district, our site visit found that teachers were consciously aligning their instructional activities to the instructional objectives measured by the district's CRT (N7).

Although "alignment" strategies can affect the content of lessons that students receive, teachers can still use different strategies of instructional grouping and pacing to deliver this content. To affect these teaching strategies, some districts in our sample coupled curriculum reforms to training in "individualized" and/or "mastery" instruction (C15,N1,U3,U4). In these districts, CRTs were used, not simply for year-end or quarterly monitoring of instructional outcomes, but also to place students in instructional groups. CRTs measuring student performance on the objectives of small instructional units were developed and used throughout the year to assess students' readiness and need for instruction and to assess mastery of specific instructional units. Thus, "individualized" and "mastery" learning strategies appear not only to structure the content of instruction, but also to shape decisions about instructional grouping and pacing that occur throughout the academic year.

Computerized instructional management systems can aid in the development of individualized instructional strategies. But most of the computerized systems we observed functioned as monitoring devices and were less useful in helping teachers make day-to-day decisions about the instruction to be provided to students. Yet some districts were making significant strides in this direction (C7,U4,U9). For example, one district in our sample had recently purchased a management information system that could generate and score CRTs; keep a record of student's mastery of instructional objectives as the tests were scored; generate data on mastery of objectives by individual students, by classrooms, and by grade levels in schools and districts; and correlate objectives with materials available and with potential instructional strategies (C1). Clearly, such a system has the potential to aid teachers in day-to-day lesson planning and operations. However, it is too early to tell how this system is being used in this district.

Implementation Strategies

In this section, we turn from the activities involved in curriculum reform to the strategies used to implement new curricula in schools. Our discussion is organized into what we see as three phases of implementation.

Design Phase

Our data show that reform efforts usually begin with a design phase that encompasses two types of activities. First, there is a search for new ideas that can guide reform activities.

Then there is the actual design of new curriculum goals and objectives, CRTs and item banks, computer software, training programs, etc.

Timelines and activities: In districts in our survey, the design phase lasted between one and three years. During the first year or so, personnel focused on generating ideas for reform. In some districts, individuals or committees were assigned to "write down ideas," observe programs in other districts, and generate initial plans (C1,N1,U4). In other districts, administrators performed these functions as a routine part of the district's strategic planning (C7,C15,C19,N7,U3).

Once these initial activities were completed, one or two more years of major activities followed. During this time instructional objectives, CRTs and item banks, computer software, inservice programs and other aspects of reform initiatives were actually designed. In most districts, these efforts began on a small scale. For example, districts often limited their reform initiatives to a single curriculum area, and often further restricted reforms to the elementary level. These experiences were then used to develop a routine process that was applied to other curriculum areas and grade levels at later points in time (C7,N1,U3,U4,U7).

Local vs. external design: During the design stage, districts varied in the extent to which ideas originated locally or were imported from the outside. In most cases, districts tended to use their own staff and to develop reforms locally, especially when they were designing new instructional goals and objectives (C7,C15, C19,N1,U4,U7). But this was not always the case. One district used both insiders and outside consultants to set instructional objectives (N7), another aligned its local objectives to the terminal objectives defined by the CTBS (C1), and another district participated in a consortium of districts that developed objectives, materials, and CRTs (U3). One respondent summarized the pros and cons involved in choosing local vs. outside development of curricula. He argued that local development encouraged a sense of ownership among local personnel and thus encouraged implementation. But he also noted that this kind of local development was more costly and time-consuming than importing ready-made objectives and CRTs from the outside (N1). It is interesting to note that participation in a consortium with other districts might provide a middle ground in the local vs. outside debate. In consortia, development costs can be shared among districts, and district personnel can retain a sense of ownership.

Top down vs. participatory decision making: Districts also varied in the extent to which curriculum reforms were undertaken using either a "top down" or "participatory" decision-making style. When districts used "top down" processes, central office staff, usually district curriculum specialists, designed the new curricula (U7). By contrast, when districts used "participative" decision styles, task forces or curriculum committees composed of school and district staff designed new curricula. These committees varied in

their decision-making power. Some committees had advisory powers (C1,C19); others had actual decision-making authority (C9,U4). There were also differences in how these committees were constituted. In some districts, "master teachers" were appointed to committees; in others, there was an attempt to choose a representative group of teachers from all of the district's schools (C7). When reforms in secondary curricula were made, department chairs and curriculum administrators at the school level were also included as members of curriculum committees (C8).

Field Testing Phase

After new curricula are designed, some districts engage in field testing. This phase can last between one and three years. Field testing can be informal and analogous to a shakedown cruise on a new ship (C1,N1,U7), or it can be a highly formalized procedure that begins with formative assessment of implementation problems and concludes with a summative assessment of accomplishments (C7, U3,U4).

Need for field testing: Field testing can help answer a number of questions that remain after curricula have been designed. By choosing a few sites for initial implementation, and by observing these schools closely, field tests can be used to determine how long it takes schools to implement changes, to find good and bad items in CRTs for use in district-wide assessment instruments, to examine whether materials or instructional strategies developed by district committees are useful in teaching objectives, to analyze the extent to which students are actually meeting new instructional objectives, and to examine the success of new training procedures.

Timelines and activities: Three districts in our survey developed highly formalized procedures for conducting field tests of new curricula (C7,U3,U4). In these districts, field testing lasted between two and three years. In the first year, schools in the field test were involved in a formative assessment. Problems with test items, objectives, materials, instructional strategies and student attainment were noted and given to the district committees that had designed the reform effort. These committees then revised curricula and either engaged in another year of field testing or performed a summative assessment of the revised curricula. In two districts, the summative assessments compared student achievement on standardized tests in schools that did and did not implement the new curricula (U3,U4).

Implementation Phase

Mandatory vs. voluntary implementation: Once reforms have been designed and field tested, implementation can begin. An initial choice is whether implementation is mandatory or voluntary. In most districts in the survey, implementation was mandatory (C1,C7,C15,C19,N1,N7,U7), but in two districts it was optional (U3,U4). In one of these districts, the curriculum reforms were specifically designed to be used in schools with high proportions

of economically disadvantaged, low achieving students (U3). In a second district, the implementation of a new system of goal-based instructional management had initially been mandatory. However, a "top down" decision process had been used in the design stage, implementation had been hurried, and teachers were not provided with sufficient training. The resulting uproar among teachers, coupled with a change in superintendents, led the new superintendent to make implementation of the program optional (U4).

Line and staff functions: During implementation, districts often attempt to overcome a common problem. Traditionally, curriculum revision has been a staff function in districts, and the specialists who designed new curricula lacked the line authority necessary to implement curricular revisions. To circumvent this problem, many districts in our survey redesigned or clarified lines of authority. In these districts, the development and implementation of instructional improvements were made a line responsibility and thus given over to principals. This resulted in new responsibilities and changed evaluation criteria for principals, who were now held responsible for implementation of district curriculum reforms (C1,C7,U7,N1).

In two districts, the line vs. staff dilemma also led to a redesign of the district administrative staff. In a medium-sized district that was implementing a computerized instructional management system, a staff position responsible for testing and evaluation was merged into the line position of deputy superintendent in order to establish a chain of command that would ensure implementation (C1). In another very large district, an administrative reorganization created a new administrative position with the sole responsibility of supervising principals (N1).

Although most districts in the survey developed this "chain of command" approach to implementation, one district formulated an alternative strategy based on Rensis Likert's "linking pin" concept of organization design (C19). In this small district, which had revised its instructional objectives and developed a computerized management information system, the superintendent formed school-level "leadership teams." These teams were composed of the school principal, assistant principal, teachers, and administrative interns. This group, which was active in the district's inservice program, was made responsible for the implementation of the new curriculum initiatives. These groups currently meet at a three-day leadership retreat at the beginning of the year and five more times during the remainder of the year. The meetings serve as an opportunity to discuss implementation strategies and progress.

Training activities: In addition to redesigning lines of authority, districts also designed training activities to assist the implementation of new curricula. Districts varied in the amounts and types of training offered and in the delivery systems used to provide training.

Training activities often began informally as key administrators attempted to "sell" reforms to board members, administrative staff, and teachers (C1,N7,U3,U4,U7). Often this included exposure to the need for and philosophy behind curricular changes and more systematic demonstrations of new materials, technologies, and instructional strategies. One respondent noted that it was important to provide principals with this early information and exposure, especially when they bear the major responsibility for implementation (U3).

Once a climate of acceptance developed, many districts focused initial training efforts on principals. Two districts in our sample provided principals with short (one- to three-hour) training sessions designed to acquaint them with the new district curriculum guides and to teach them how to administer and use CRTs to diagnose instructional problems (C1,N1). In other districts, principals were provided with more extensive training. For example, two districts provided principals with the training in how to teach the curricula and also trained principals in techniques they would need to supervise implementation of the new curricula (U3,U7).

Teachers were often trained after principals. In two districts in our study, principals were trained first and then used to provide teachers with training during faculty meetings (C1,N1). In these districts, in-school training focused on administration and use of CRTs and curriculum guides. Two other districts used a similar approach but instead of training only principals, they focused initial training on "cadres" or teams composed of principals and teachers from school sites. The newly trained cadres then returned to their school sites to provide leadership and training to teachers (C19,U7). In one of these districts, training was extensive. The cadres received three weeks of training at a summer institute and then conducted inservice at their own schools on how to implement the district's new writing curriculum (U7).

Other districts used a different strategy to deliver intensive training to teachers. In these districts, training became the major thrust of the district inservice program. In one district, all new teachers currently receive 11 hours of training in how to implement the district's goal-based instructional management system, and other teachers can use the services of the district's teacher center to obtain information and services related to the new management system (U4). In a second district, external consultants have provided a total of 212 days of training to teachers at 14 school sites as the district has implemented its new system of individualized instruction (U3).

Costs: A major dilemma that districts face is how to meet the costs associated with curriculum reforms. In the design stage, payment for release time of staff serving on curriculum task forces is the major cost. During field testing and implementation, districts pay training costs for principals and teachers, and, if they are implementing computerized instructional management systems, they incur data processing costs. Training costs include not only

staff release time, but also materials costs and salaries for trainers. Data processing costs include capital expenditures for the purchase of computers, computer programs, printers, and optical scanners, as well as such on-going costs as maintenance contracts, salaries for computer operators, materials such as test forms, and overhead for data processing services.

A few districts were able to absorb these costs without seeking external funding, but most districts used Title IV C or state "school improvement" monies to partially offset costs. Thus, costs for actual implementation of curriculum reforms, especially capital costs associated with the implementation of computerized management information systems, were considerable, and districts most often required external funding to implement training activities and new computerized management systems.

Analysis and Discussion

The most striking theme to emerge from our analysis is that curriculum revision takes a very long time to implement. The most careful districts in our study took between three and six years to design, field test, and train staff for the first year of implementation, and these lengthy efforts were often devoted to the reform of only a single curriculum area at only one level of the school system. Our analysis suggests that the pace of implementation becomes faster as districts acquire experience in curriculum revision, but, as several of our respondents noted, moving too quickly toward reform can often be undesirable. Rapid implementation can promote confusion and resistence, especially when district initiatives are seen as eroding traditional school responsibility for curriculum development, whereas slower and more careful implementation can result in more acceptance by principals and teachers (U4,U7).

Problems Encountered by Districts

As districts implemented curriculum reforms, they experienced a number of problems. These are discussed below.

Problems with Objectives

As districts set new instructional objectives, a persistent problem was the question of how many objectives to set. We found enormous variation in the number of instructional objectives that districts set, ranging from around twelve objectives per grade in a given subject to nearly one hundred objectives. Our analysis suggests that setting too few or too many objectives creates problems, but we did not uncover any clear rule about the appropriate number of objectives to set.

A danger in setting too few objectives is that teachers will feel constrained. One respondent in our survey noted that, before implementation, teachers often routinely exceeded the

objectives specified in the new district curricula, but after implementation, many teachers felt they needed permission to exceed identified objectives (C7). Another respondent noted that the implementation of uniform instructional objectives could "leave individual ideas and creativity behind," especially if teachers decided to do only what was required and no more (C1). Thus, there appears to be a danger in setting a small number of minimum or target objectives: individual initiative can be discouraged, and classroom instructional programs can be targeted toward minimum goals. To avoid this, districts can set a greater number of objectives, but, as one respondent noted, the setting of a large number of objectives may be "too ambitious" and serve to confuse teachers (C7). Clearly, some middle ground in the number of objectives is needed, and every effort should be made to encourage teachers to use their own initiative in order to exceed specified instructional objectives.

Our respondents also noted that the setting of instructional objectives produced conflict. For example, two respondents noted that a majority of teachers could accept any one specific objective, but a considerable minority almost always did not accept the objective (C7,N7). In systems that used participative decision-making to set objectives, the resolution of these conflicts tended to be "cumbersome" and time-consuming (C7). Moreover, there was the worrisome problem of whether or not teachers who had a different approach to instruction and who disagreed with district goals were actually teaching to the objectives set by the district (N7). Finally, as one respondent noted, the setting of district-wide objectives for secondary schools produced conflict because departments and department heads in secondary schools have traditionally had a great degree of autonomy in the area of curriculum (C7).

Problems with Computerized Information Systems

The implementation of computerized instructional management systems also created problems. Virtually all of the districts in our survey that had developed CRTs and used these to monitor the success of their instructional program noted that this form of data-based management created "fear" and resistence on the part of teachers (C1,C7,N1,N7,U4). In part, this is because such systems can easily be used to evaluate teachers on the basis of student performance. In one district, teacher resistence was initially so high that the teacher union sued the district to prevent the evaluative use of the system (N1). Most districts worked extremely hard to overcome this resistence by assuring teachers that such systems were not being used as part of personnel evaluation and that the systems were useful for instructional planning and assessment.

Teachers expressed other concerns about instructional management systems. In several districts, teachers felt that the district's use of CRTs to monitor instruction increased the amount of paperwork they were required to do (C1,C7,N1,U4). In another district, teachers objected to the multiple choice scoring system

used to assess writing skills and urged the development of a wholistic scoring system (N1). Teachers in this same district also noted that the year-end CRT was given too early in the year and that they had not yet covered some of the skills tested. As a result, they said they would have to change the sequence in which they presented material in order to conform to the timing of tests (N1).

Problems with Principals

A final problem was related to the new responsibilities placed on principals. Most districts required principals to become more active as both curricular and instructional leaders during the implementation of curriculum reforms. But a number of respondents in our survey noted that some principals had difficulty assuming these new responsibilities (C7,N1,N7). One problem was that principals often lacked the skills needed to assume leadership (N1). Another problem was that the new initiatives were perceived as diminishing the traditional authority principals had for curriculum and instruction at their school sites (N1). And finally, like teachers, principals can fear the potential for evaluation associated with new data-based management systems (C7).

Districts responded to these problems in a number of ways. Some provided principals with training both in the new systems that were being implemented and in the skills needed to become instructional and curriculum leaders (C1,N1,U7). Others provided support in the form of "team-based" management. For example, in one district, implementation became the responsibility of a team of school-level staff, making the principal less of a "lonely figure" (C19). But, in the final analysis, districts were also forced to replace some principals in order to find individuals more suited to the newly defined role of the principalship.

Analysis and Discussion

It is clear that curriculum reforms are not accomplished without conflict and resistence. The process of setting instructional objectives uncovers conflicts among teachers over appropriate instructional objectives and approaches and sometimes creates resistence among staff used to having considerable autonomy in the areas of curriculum and instruction. Similarly, the implementation of data-based instructional management systems can create conflict and resistence. The use of these systems unleashed high levels of concern among both principals and teachers over the issue of accountability for student performance on CRTs. Thus, conflict and resistence were often cited by district staff as major barriers to curriculum reform.

Such conflicts are partly resolved by teacher and principal turnover. Districts can expect certain staff to leave the system or seek new responsibilities as a result of new curriculum initiatives. District staff can also expect to spend a great deal of time "selling" the new reforms both in the early stages and as

reforms are being implemented. This requires not simply educating staff about the philosophy and goals of the new reforms, but also providing staff with systematic training in how to implement new reforms. Finally, our analysis suggests that taking a slow and careful approach to implementation can ease confusion in the early stages of implementation and thus ease staff resistence.

PATHWAYS TO EXCELLENCE IN STAFF DEVELOPMENT

In this chapter, we use data from the regional survey to discuss four issues related to staff development in school districts: (1) What concerns led districts in the survey to provide staff development programs for principals and teachers? (2) What types of programs were provided? (3) How were such programs implemented? (4) What problems did districts encounter in implementing these programs?

Concerns Leading to District-Level Staff Development Programs

The data suggest that school districts initated staff development programs in response to three types of concerns.

Problems with Preservice Training

A number of respondents in our survey believed that preservice training for teachers and principals was inadequate (C17, C20,N2,N6,U4). In one district, administrators believed that many teachers did not understand how to teach reading, and they attributed this to inadequate preservice training (U4). In another district, a respondent argued that during preservice training "teachers were not prepared to teach effectively" (C20). In a third district, enrollment declines had led some teachers to be given teaching assignments that were not consistent with their major fields of preservice preparation (C17). Because these reassigned teachers did not know subject content, one respondent felt that they were often "not very good teachers." Other respondents noted shortcomings in the preservice training of principals, especially those trained and hired some years ago. As one respondent commented, "many principals were hired to take care of the physical plant and boiler rather than to educate kids and motivate teachers" (N6).

Emergence of Clear Models of Teaching and Supervision

Respondents also developed district-wide staff development programs as they became aware of new models of clinical supervision and effective teaching. Administrators in these districts were convinced that a systematic application of these new models could improve instruction (C6,C16,C20,C21,N2,U7). Two related types of staff development programs were common in these districts. First, both teachers and administrators were given training programs in effective teaching. Second, principals and/or master teachers were given training in clinical supervision. The rationale for such activities was clear. As one district administrator who favored clinical supervision told us, when principals rarely go into classrooms, "teachers are free to be good, mediocre or whatever" (U4). And, as a respondent who favored training programs in effective

teaching told us, "teachers can do a better job when they are provided with a model of effective teaching" (C20).

Need of Staff for Peer Support and Professional Development

In a third set of districts, staff development was viewed as a response to the individualized needs of teachers and principals. In some districts, a goal of staff development was to overcome the sense of isolation that school personnel often feel, and staff development programs that utilized teacher centers or collegial groups were developed so that staff could discuss work-related problems in a "supportive" and "non-threatening" environment (C2, C13, U2). In other districts, staff development programs were designed to meet the individualized, professional development goals of teachers (C12,C21,U2). For example, one district began a training program in classroom management after a group of teachers recognized their need for such a program (C12). In other districts, numerous workshops and minicourses are offered at a central location, and teachers can obtain professional development credit for participation (C21,U2).

Analysis and Discussion

The data suggest that staff development programs are designed to meet two kinds of training needs in districts. The first type is designed to meet the individualized needs of teachers for professional development or the idiosyncratic needs of teachers and administrators as these arise in their unique work situations. Such needs are often met by the development of collegial support groups or teacher centers which emphasize personal development and program diversity. This staff-driven inservice can be contrasted with a second type of staff development program that arises from more generalized concerns in districts. For example, lack of adequate preservice training or the need to develop better supervision bring about more standardized inservice programs. Although a later section of this chapter describes how these standardized programs manage to maintain some of the voluntary characteristics of the teacher center model, our data will also show that many districts are moving toward mandatory training programs in effective teaching and clinical supervision that have implications for teacher supervision and evaluation.

Types of Staff Development Programs

In this section, we discuss the types of staff development programs that existed in districts in our survey.

Staff-driven Programs

One form of staff development is driven by the needs of staff members. Perhaps the best-known model of this is the teacher center. In one district in our sample, the teacher center was the major provider of inservice training and was seen as a valuable

resource, not only by the teachers, but also by administrators and the community (U2). The teacher center in this district provided a number of services. It was initially designed as a place for teachers to obtain assistance in developing curriculum or improving instructional skills. But through time, other functions were added. For example, the Director of the Center now distributes a needs assessment to all staff at the beginning of the year and uses the results of this to structure a series of workshops during the year. In the past few years, workshops on topics such as math or computer education, teacher conferencing, and first aid certification have been offered. Some workshops are held only once, but at any point in time, there are also two or three workshops that meet once a week after school. These ongoing workshops are important in this rural district located far from the state's major universities. Instructors are recruited from university staff and state department officials, and the workshops provide highly motivated staff with otherwise rare training opportunities.

In another district, a request by administrators led to the development of an inservice program for principals and assistant principals (C13). The superintendent appointed four principals to develop this program, and they, in turn, developed the program by distributing a needs assessment questionnaire to all principals and assistant principals in the district. Like the teacher center discussed above, this program served multiple functions. The principals who headed the program served as consultants to district administrators, and one respondent described the program as a "haven" where principals could confidentially request information and obtain assistance with work-related problems. A self-assessment tool was also developed by program staff. This was a questionnaire that principals could use to assess their skills in such areas as curriculum development, instructional supervision, personnel evaluation, and student relations. Finally, collegial groups were formed. These groups met and set their own agendas, although program staff served as facilitators.

Smaller districts in our survey often did not have such broad programs of inservice, but their programs did have many of the characteristics of these larger, staff-initiated programs. For example, in one district, a specific request by teachers for training in classroom management led to the provision of workshops by outside consultants (C12). And in another district, a part of the district's management training included the development of a weekly luncheon for principals that served the functions of a "collegial support team" (C2). Over time, the nature of this group changed according to the ebb and flow of interest and motivation on the part of participants.

Basic Courses in Instructional Skills and Supervision

Another group of districts had forsaken the "menu" approach of staff-initiated programs and concentrated resources on delivering a standardized training program in effective teaching and clinical supervision to principals and teachers in the district (C6,C8,C10,

C15,C20,N2,U7). There was a remarkable similarity in the types of training offered across the several districts using this model, in part because many of these programs were highly influenced by the work of Madeline Hunter and other popular consultants.

In the initial phase of the program, principals and "master" teachers were given training in clinical supervision and effective instruction. In the next step, the master teachers offered two to five day workshops for other teachers. These workshops trained teachers in "direct instruction," lesson planning, classroom management, assertive discipline, motivation and learning theory, use of behavioral objectives, and applications of Bloom's taxonomy. As a final step, most programs included one to three "follow-up" observations in which trainers or principals observed teachers in their classrooms and coached them in the skills learned at workshops.

These programs cannot remain forever as the core of a district's training program. After a number of years, many district teachers will have received the "basic" course and there will be a need to supply these teachers with alternative types of training. Several of the districts in our sample have already reached this point and are now offering second level or "advanced" courses. In one district, teachers who have received the basic course can participate in "maintenance" support groups that meet once a month in a teacher's home (C15). Other districts offer a refresher course (C20) or a variety of other workshops (C21).

Curriculum-specific Training Programs

Other districts concentrate staff development resources on a third kind of staff development program designed to train teachers and administrators how to implement district curricula (U3,U4,U7). In one district, all new teachers are given 11 hours of training in how to implement the district's goal-based instructional management system, and the district's Teacher Center is designed to provide information and services related to the new management system to other teachers. In another district (U3), the implementation of new curricula is accompanied by intensive inservice training at school sites. In a third district (U7), each time new curricula are adopted by the district, a training program is developed. In this district, all administrators and some teachers are trained in how to implement the new curricular program, and they provide inservice training at school sites.

Mixed Models

Although we have made analytic distinctions between types of staff development programs, some districts have programs that contain elements of more than one of these models. For example, in one district (U7), staff development in secondary schools is focused on a basic program in effective teaching. But in elementary schools, the district is focusing on curriculum-specific training. In another district (C21), which one respondent called "the staff development capitol of the world," inservice training has been a

major priority for nearly a decade. The current program, housed in the Professional Development Center, not only offers the diversity of workshops characteristic of teacher centers, but also offers basic courses in effective teaching and clinical supervision, as well as courses for school-level instructional support teams in topics such as school planning. In addition, in recent years the district has begun to develop more curriculum-specific training.

Analysis and Discussion

The data on different types of staff development programs point to two trends in inservice training. First, there appears to be a tendency for districts to move away from staff-initiated models of inservice. Instead, many districts in our survey are beginning to concentrate staff development resources on a common core of workshops in instructional skills and clinical supervision. The rationale behind this strategy is that the common training allows district staff to develop a common set of understandings about teaching and instruction which enhance the capacity of staff members to talk together and build a climate that supports instructional improvement (C8,C20). The common workshops also develop leadership skills among both principals and "master" teachers, and thus endow a large number of staff members with the coaching and leadership skills needed to help improve teaching in the school.

A second trend in the survey data is the tendency for districts to adopt curriculum-specific training programs. Those districts which had provided a common core of training in instructional skills to a large number of staff were beginning to replace or supplement this program with a newer training program that coincided with the implementation of new curricula. These programs can build on the skills provided by workshops on clinical supervision and effective teaching, but they also move considerably beyond this by focusing on subtle, curriculum-specific problems such as the choice of particular instructional strategies or techniques for using new instructional materials.

Implementation Strategies

In this section, we turn from a description of types of staff development programs to a discussion of strategies used to implement these programs.

Design Phase

The data show that before districts implement new training programs, they spend between one and two years investigating alternative types of staff development programs, designing a program suited to their particular needs, and choosing local staff members to become trainers.

Search for training programs: The search for appropriate training programs was often initiated after a core group of staff

within the district expressed interest in developing new models of staff development. There was considerable variation in membership in this core group. Sometimes the core group was composed of key district administrators who wanted to act in a "top down" style to expand the district's role in providing staff development (C8,C15, N2,U7). In other districts, the core group seemed to spontaneously evolve from the recognition of a number of different staff members that better staff development programs were needed in the district. In one district, for example, a core group of several committed teachers worked to initiate a teacher center (U2). In another district, the principal and a group of teachers in a school sparked the search for improved staff development options (C12). And in a third district, a broad spectrum of teachers and administrators simultaneously and independently concluded that the district needed an in-house staff development program (C21).

Once the core group made their interests known, a search of alternative training programs began. In many cases, the superintendent appointed one or more persons from the core group of initiators to investigate training programs and design one for the district. In this stage, most districts looked at a number of different programs and combined various elements of these into a specific program congruent with local needs (C8,C15,C20,N2). In California, for example, district staff examined training programs offered by the State Department, by county offices, by private consultants, and by universities. And in all three states, districts sent staff members to UCLA for training in clinical supervision.

The search for alternative programs for teachers appears to have been easier to accomplish than the search for alternative programs for principals. Although many districts trained principals in clinical supervision, other types of training for principals were not easy to find. For example, in one district, administrators attempting to "scour the country and copy another program" found that there were very few programs that they could borrow from (C13).

Selection of trainers: Once suitable programs had been located, a group of individuals were sent for training. These individuals, in turn, became local trainers. In some districts, the individuals sent to early training and chosen to become local trainers were selected from among the "core" group of individuals who initiated the search for new staff development options (C12,C21). Other districts were very interested in developing better supervision and instructional leadership on the part of principals and "master" teachers, and thus sent all principals, as well as a selected group of teachers, to receive early training (C6,C8,U7). In some of these districts, only the teachers would serve as trainers, but in others, both teachers and principals became trainers. Finally, in smaller districts, a single teacher or principal was chosen to receive early training and then was appointed as the district's trainer (C15,C20,N7).

During this time period, administrators attempted to enhance the "credibility" of the new staff development program. Sometimes

this happened before initial training began. For example, in some districts, the superintendent and other key administrators spent time "selling" the new staff development program to principals and board members before principals and teachers were sent for early training (C21,U7). In another district, the superintendent carefully cultivated the leader of the local teacher organization and "sold" him on the benefits of the proposed staff development program (C15). In other districts, "credibility" was enhanced as participants for early training were chosen. For example, one superintendent made sure that widely respected teachers were chosen to receive early training and to become local trainers (C8). In other districts, "master" teachers were chosen to receive early training and become local trainers (C20,N7).

Implementation Stage

Once suitable programs were chosen and trainers selected, districts were ready to implement staff development programs. We found a number of variations in implementation strategies.

Training sites: As districts began to implement training programs, choices were made about where to hold training sessions and workshops. Districts tended to divide into two groups over this issue. One group held sessions in a central location such as a teacher or professional development center; the other group held training programs at school sites. The choice of a training site was not related to the type of inservice program. For example, staff-initiated programs, curriculum-specific programs and basic instructional courses were all held in both settings.

Allocation of training spots: Districts used two strategies to train the teaching staff. In one set of districts, a few teachers from each school were trained each time a training session was offered (C15,C20,C21,N2). Thus, in these districts, newly-trained teachers tended to be scattered among the district's schools. In a second set of districts, training was delivered at school sites to the entire staff (C6,U7). This strategy led to a very different distribution of trained teachers within a district. Since training proceeded on a school-by-school basis, newly trained teachers were concentrated within particular schools rather than scattered across the district's schools.

Use of release time: Districts also varied in the extent to which teachers were given "release time" to attend training. Some districts purposely avoided this practice by holding training programs after school (U2,C12) or during summer months (C8). Other districts held their training programs during the school year. In one district using a school-based strategy to deliver training on effective teaching, schools receiving training were closed for two days (C6). More common, however, was the granting of release time to teachers so that they could attend two to five day workshops at a central location (C15,C20,C21,N2).

Virtually all of the respondents who granted release time to teachers believed that this practice created management problems. In one district, teachers involved in training were absent from their classrooms for four days, and the "master" teachers who served as part-time trainers and coaches were absent from their classrooms as many as 10 to 15 times during the year. A number of respondents agreed that this created disruptions to students' instructional programs (C8,C15,C20,N2). One apparent way to minimize this problem is to hire full-time trainers rather than use part-time trainers who must be released from their classrooms. Other respondents discussed the scheduling problems associated with the use of release time (C15,N2). In one district, principals complained of being "overloaded" by scheduling demands; another district developed a master schedule to cope with these problems. Several districts chose to avoid these disruptions by scheduling workshops during summer months (C8) or after school (C12). In both these districts, the money that would have been paid to substitutes was given as a stipend to teachers who attended workshops.

Voluntary vs. mandatory participation: Another dilemma is whether training programs should be mandatory. In staff-driven programs, training was always optional. This was also true in most other districts. But there were important exceptions. For example, in a district that was implementing a goal-based instructional management system, all new teachers were required to receive training, whereas training was voluntary for older teachers (U4). Also, many districts that offered a basic course in effective teaching made training in clinical supervision mandatory (U7) or "strongly recommended" (C21) for principals. Only one district in our survey made training in effective teaching mandatory for all teachers (C20).

When training was optional, a number of respondents noted that the "best" teachers tended to be the earliest volunteers (C20, C21,N2, U7). One respondent thought this pattern was desirable because it discouraged the perception among teachers that the district's training program was a "fixum" shop (C21).

Relation to evaluation: A fourth dilemma is whether to connect training programs to personnel evaluation. As one respondent noted, many administrators "tread softly" on this issue (C20). A common view is that staff development programs should be kept separate from evaluation, and that every effort should be made to communicate to staff that remediation is not the focus of the training programs (C20,C21).

Nevertheless, in many districts, there is an inevitable drift toward mixing staff evaluation and staff development. For example, in a district that developed a self-assessment instrument for principals, some members of the district staff urged that the instrument be used to evaluate principals (C13). In another district, the implementation of a training program on effective teaching coincided with a contractual agreement that allowed the district to evaluate teachers more frequently in return for salary

increases (C8). And in a third district implementing a basic course in instructional skills, the expectation grew among board members and administrators that teachers should exhibit the instructional skills taught in training programs (C21).

The most obvious way inservice training becomes related to evaluation is through a change in the criteria by which staff are evaluated. For example, in a district that had recently trained its principals in clinical supervision, principals were evaluated by the superintendent and required to show evidence that they had engaged in clinical supervision during the school year (U7). In two other districts, both of which had implemented training in effective teaching, administrators were considering revising the forms or "checklists" used during formal teacher evaluations to correspond more closely to the specific skills taught in inservice programs (C8,N2).

Costs: A final problem is how to fund staff development programs. During implementation, districts must pay the costs of training materials (written materials, video tapes), travel costs of trainers and administrators as they examine alternative training programs, salaries for secretarial staff, trainers, substitute teachers, teachers, and overhead costs for the space used to hold training workshops. Districts used a number of strategies to minimize these costs. For example, in some districts, teachers received no reimbursement for attendence. Other districts used volunteer trainers. And finally, districts that held training at school sites, rather than a central location, held down overhead costs for space.

Most districts used a variety of funding sources to cover these costs. In the initial stages, and when federal fundings were more available, external fundings were used to pay the costs of staff development. Popular funding sources among districts in our sample were Chapter II funds, Teacher Center funds, and foundation grants. Some districts were particularly aggressive in seeking outside support for staff development, especially if they maintained an ambitious program. As one respondent told us, "every time we wrote a grant, it had a staff development component" (C21).

Nevertheless, virtually all districts used general funds to support staff development, especially as external funding sources decreased. This sometimes led to decreases in services or to conflict. In one district, for example, custodial services were reduced and funds for extracurricular activities decreased. This district also closed a school and rented district property in order to generate funds that could be used for staff development (C8). In other districts, the allocation of funds to staff development created conflicts over budget priorities. In one district, teachers feared that the allocation of district funds to staff development would decrease the monies available for increases in teacher salaries (C15). In another district, an informant told us that the use of Chapter II funds to pay for staff development "reduced conflict." In this district, only the librarians, who used Chapter II funds to

purchase materials, had claims on the monies earmarked for staff development, and the district was able to use its own funds to buy these materials (N2).

Analysis and Discussion

A number of interesting themes have emerged from the data on implementation. The first is the common tendency among districts to maintain a distinction between staff development and evaluation. The rationale for this distinction is clear. This posture prevents staff development programs from being labeled as "fixum" shops and eases potential fears on the part of teachers. At the same time, however, this posture leads administrators to make most programs optional, with the result that the district's "best" teachers flock to training programs while those most in need remain untrained. Moreover, the distinction is, in one sense, unrealistic. In many of the districts in our sample, there was a strong drift toward using staff development programs to define what it means to be a good teacher or instructional leader. We wonder whether districts should or even can keep these definitions separate from the criteria they use to formally evaluate teachers and principals.

It is also interesting to recall the tradeoffs involved in implementing staff development programs. It was clear from our survey that the use of release time to provide staff development training disrupted the instruction of some students. Moreover, the more districts attempted to use teachers as trainers and coaches, the more these best teachers were removed from classrooms. This was especially true when districts employed part-time trainers and coaches rather than full-time trainers. There is probably no solution to this dilemma, but there is some irony in the fact that the "best" teachers are often removed from the classroom when they assume the role of instructional leadership.

Finally, it was clear that staff development programs operated under severe resource constraints. It appears that in most districts, staff development programs are viewed as peripheral. They are often supported by external fundings and, when supported by district fundings, are, as one respondent noted, "vulnerable to budget cuts" (C6). Because of this, it takes a long time for most staff development programs to be implemented. Most of the districts in our sample that were providing a basic instructional course to teachers could afford to hire only one or two trainers, and each of these trainers could train only 30 to 60 teachers a year. Thus, in most districts, it will take several years to train the entire staff in the new basics of effective teaching.

Problems Encountered by Districts

Respondents in our survey described two major problems in the implementation of staff development programs.

Staff Resistance

Staff resistance was often cited as a barrier to the implementation of new staff development programs (C15,C20,N2,U2,U7). In some cases, resistance came from principals who were asked to assume more leadership and be trained in clinical supervision. As one respondent noted, some principals were "pretty much in a managerial mode and had a hard time making the transition" (U7). Others noted resistance from teachers. Some were "suspicious" of staff development programs (C12), perhaps because they felt they didn't need additional training (C20) or because they were threatened by the process of change itself (U2). There also seemed to be more resistance to staff development among secondary teachers. This was true in both staff-initiated programs (U2) and programs that offered a basic course in instructional skills (N2). One respondent thought that secondary teachers saw basic training in instructional skills as unsuited to the needs of subject matter specialists. He also noted that by adapting his courses to these complaints, he had overcome resistance (N2). But other respondents noted that there will always be a small group of teachers who remain skeptical of the training program and who refuse to participate in it (C12,C20).

Changing People

Other respondents noted that it is difficult to change people, even if they are willing to participate in and support the staff development program. One respondent noted that many of the older teachers and administrators in his district "just can't catch up" on the new expectations about leadership and teaching (C21). He felt that the staff development program was most successful with younger staff members. Other respondents cautioned against expecting change to occur rapidly. They urged districts to recognize that people change at different rates, and that many change slowly (C8,U7). These respondents argued that slow implementation of staff development programs, when accompanied by assurances that changes would be made gradually, can remove much of the resistance staff members feel toward change.

Analysis and Discussion

Most of the respondents in our survey noted that staff development programs were well-received, but that there were pockets of resistance. Thus, an important stage for staff development programs, especially those offering a basic course in instructional skills, appears to occur just after the "best" and most enthusiastic teachers have been trained. It is at this point that these committed teachers and those who resist staff development compete for the loyalty of teachers whose interest in staff development is only marginal. Most districts in our sample successfully passed this point by choosing respected teacher leaders to be early trainees and by working hard to "sell" the program to staff members.

At the same time, respondents working in the most successful staff development programs in our survey recognized that attempts

to re-train individuals must proceed slowly and that, for some individuals, staff development will not lead to profound change. Nevertheless, if such programs do not lead to individual change, they often change the climate within schools. In fact, many of the staff developers we talked with saw this as a major outcome of staff development programs. Successful programs can lead to the development of a common language to talk about instruction and the formation of clear expectations about what constitutes good instruction. These ideas can then be used to build a climate that promotes school improvement.

PATHWAYS TO EXCELLENCE IN SUPERVISION AND EVALUATION

In this chapter, we consider four questions related to evaluation and supervision in school districts: (1) Why have districts become active in the areas of evaluation and supervision? (2) What types of changes in evaluation and supervision procedures are districts making? (3) How have districts implemented these changes? And, (4) What problems have districts experienced as they implemented these changes?

The discussion in this chapter centers on two major areas of school district activities: testing programs and procedures used to supervise and evaluate instructional staff.

Concerns Leading to Changes in Supervision and Evaluation

Three types of concerns led school districts in our study to revise procedures of supervision and evaluation.

Accountability

In a number of districts in our study, pressures for accountability led to revised supervision and evaluation procedures. In some cases, there were changes in testing programs and the procedures used to evaluate instructional programs (C6,C15,N1,N7). For example, one school district developed a criterion-referenced testing program in order to provide additional evidence to the state legislature that his district was serious about responding to the concerns (N7). In other districts, new testing programs were established in response to concerns expressed by the local board (C6,C15,N1). Accountability concerns also affected procedures for supervision and evaluation. For example, in two districts, school board concerns about the quality of teaching led to the initiation of teacher remediation programs (C18,U8).

Curriculum Reform

The development of new evaluation procedures was also spurred by curriculum change. For example, in some districts, changes in the district testing program came about in an attempt to "align" testing programs to new district curricula (C1). Other districts developed criterion-referenced testing systems to measure student performance on objectives spelled out in new district scope and sequence charts (C7,C15,N1,N7,U3,U4).

Staff Development

New initiatives in staff development programs also led to changes in evaluation and supervision procedures. In a number of districts, staff development programs proceeded on the assumption that instruction can be improved by supervisory practices that provide principals and teachers with advice and counsel on specific instructional techniques. Thus, districts that changed staff development programs also often initiated reforms in supervision and evaluation procedures (C6,C8,C19,C20,C21,N2,U7).

Analysis and Discussion

The concerns that led districts to reform evaluation procedures appeared to influence the types of evaluation activities selected by districts. For example, districts that had strong staff development programs tended to place great emphasis on clinical supervision. And when curriculum reform was a major focus, there appeared to be a tendency to change testing programs. However, reforms in evaluation did not seem to be generalized. That is, districts that engaged in one type of evaluation reform, for example, changed testing instruments, did not necessarily change other evaluation procedures, for example, teacher observation instruments.

Types of Evaluation

Having outlined the concerns that led districts to change evaluation procedures, we now turn to the types of evaluation procedures that districts in our sample were developing.

District Testing Programs

We begin our discussion of evaluation with district testing programs. These programs are designed to evaluate instructional outcomes using achievement tests that measure students' achievement of basic skills. District testing programs varied in the types of tests used, the areas of the curriculum tested, the purposes of the testing program, and the dissemination of results.

Type of test: Districts in our sample used two types of achievement tests to evaluate instructional outcomes. One type was the standardized or norm-referenced achievement test (NRT). A second type was the criterion-referenced test (CRT). There was an increasing tendency among districts in our sample to develop criterion-referenced testing systems that used CRTs to measure student attainment of specific skills embedded in district-level scope and sequence charts (C1,C6,C7,C15,C19,N1,N7,U4,U7). It is worth noting that the development of these new testing systems did not result in the elimination of standardized tests. Most districts in our sample, even those that developed CRTs, continued to use standardized tests at least in some grades.

Scope of testing programs: Testing programs were generally designed to measure student performance in such basic skill areas as reading, arithmetic, and writing. Standardized tests were often used as summary measures of skill achievement and thus were administered only once a year or at certain grade levels (C6,C7). CRTs were administered more frequently, especially when they were used for diagnostic and instructional purposes (C19,N1,U3,U4).

Some districts were expanding CRT systems to cover more than basic skills achievement at the elementary level. For example, one district in our sample had developed CRTs measuring student performance in social studies, health, and science at the secondary level (C7). This same district had also developed CRTs for vocational and bilingual education programs. Another district was developing CRTs that measured students' attainment of specific objectives in courses offered in the district's high school program (C15).

Purposes of testing: Testing programs were designed to serve a number of different purposes in districts in our sample. One common purpose of testing programs was to publicize the academic accomplishments of districts. Every district in our sample had at least one test used for this purpose (C1,C6,C15,N1,N7,U8). An interesting observation derived from our data is that NRTs appear to be better suited to publicizing district accomplishments than CRTs. First, NRTs are highly generalized tests which allow the academic performance of schools and districts to be compared. But, second, and perhaps more importantly, the public is more familiar with NRTs than CRTs. For example, one respondent who attempted to publicize the results of CRTs used in his district found that both the news media and the public were more interested in NRT results (N1). He suggested that districts wishing to publicize their CRT results would have to educate the public about CRTs.

Testing programs were also used to evaluate instructional programs. Both NRT and CRT results were commonly reported for individual schools and for the district as a whole, and these results were then analyzed for strengths and weaknesses by subject area and grade level (C1,C6,C7,C15,N1,N7). Often this type of interpretation was done by district testing specialists, but some districts were beginning to train principals and teachers in the interpretation of test results, especially when CRT systems were introduced (C1,C6,C7,C15,N1,N7). In some districts, principals were trained first and given the responsibility of training teachers in their school (C1,N7), but in one district, separate training in test interpretation was provided to teachers (C7). The primary purpose of training at the school site was to develop a capacity among staff members to use test results to evaluate and adjust instructional strategies.

The analysis of test results is often complicated by technical problems, especially in districts that are developing their own CRTs. In these districts, considerable time and money was spent

ironing out technical difficulties. For example, in addition to time and energy spent assembling items that were "aligned" to local curriculum objectives, detailed item analyses were performed to screen out poorly constructed items (C7,N1). Districts also worked to iron out difficulties in test administration. For example, in one district, teachers reported problems stemming from students not knowing how to fill in answer sheets (N7). In another district, a careful examination was made of the amount of time tests were taking from instruction (C7).

A final use of testing systems was for the diagnosis of individual student achievement and the formulation of classroom instructional strategies. CRTs were used for these purposes in a number of districts (C1,C6,C7,C15,U3,U4,N1). For example, in some districts, CRTs were used as competency tests that served as a standard for promotion, retention and graduation (C7,C15). One district differentiated between "minimum" competencies, "target" competencies, and "optional" competencies (C7). These different levels and types of competence set separate standards for student achievement in an attempt to avoid setting minimum standards.

Other districts used CRTs to diagnose individual student learning needs and to place students in appropriate instructional settings or groups (C7,C15,C19,N1,U3,U4). For example, districts with curricula that stressed individualized instructional strategies used CRT's to assist the teacher in identifying specific needs of individual students (C1,C19,N1). Districts with well-developed computer systems had the capacity to keep records on individual students. In fact, one district reported that links between the district office and school site computers allowed for the production of custom tests tailored to the individual student's need (C19). It is interesting to note that while most districts used CRTs for these purposes, one district used a standardized test for placement purposes (C15).

Teacher Evaluation

Teacher evaluation is also a central function of school administrators. In this section, we discuss the procedures used by districts in our survey to perform teacher evaluations.

Clinical supervision: Many districts in our sample stressed clinical supervision and the frequent use of classroom observation as the primary means of assessing teacher performance. Often this was the result of staff development initiatives which trained a broad variety of teachers and principals in these techniques (C6,C8,C18,C20, C21,N2,U7). In these districts, the formative purposes of classroom observations were stressed, and supervision was viewed primarily as a means of improving teacher performance (C8,C20,C21, N2).

The frequency of classroom observations appears to have increased in many districts in our sample. Whereas teachers may have been observed once every one or two years before, some districts in

our sample were now emphasizing more frequent observations. In one district, teachers were visited at least once a week by the principal for more than a cursory observation (C8). This small district had just implemented a new staff development effort which emphasized the importance of clinical supervision and classroom observations, and even the superintendent visited classrooms on a regular basis. Another district adopted a guideline for principals to be in classrooms at least 25% of their day (C19).

In some districts, teachers were also beginning to observe each other. For example, in one district, teachers observe each others' classes on a regular basis to assist each other with teaching techniques (C21). In other districts, trainers from the district's staff development program perform "followup" visits to classrooms in order to help "coach" teachers toward the acquisition of desired teaching skills (C6,C20,C21,N2). Finally, in districts with teacher remidiation programs, specialists from the district staff are used to coach weaker teachers and help them improve performance (C18,U8).

Teacher remediation programs: Another process for teacher evaluation and supervision is a teacher remediation program. Such programs are designed to address problems with weak or incompetent teachers. Two districts in our sample had developed this type of program (C18,U8). Both districts developed procedures to identify weak teachers, to initiate a program to assist these teachers, and to terminate these teachers' contracts if they did not demonstrate improved performance over a specified time period. A strong emphasis was placed on documentation and following "due process" requirements if termination was required.

In both programs, the principal had the primary responsibility for identifying weak teachers who might be candidates for the program. Once a teacher was identified as requiring assistance, a specialist was assigned to develop a program to improve the problem teacher's performance. In most cases, the specialist was either a teacher in the district with outstanding teaching skills or a district administrator with special training. One district had an option of bringing in an outside consultant to assist the teacher if no one could be found internally that was acceptable to all parties (C18). Decisions to continue or terminate a teacher's employment were made by the superintendent based on recommendations from the specialist, the principal, and the personnel administrator for the district. The period of time a teacher received assistance could be extended if improvement had been demonstrated.

Collaboration with teachers and teacher organizations in the establishment of this type of program was considered important by our respondents. One informant suggested that the climate under which the program is presented and the degree of participation of teachers had a major influence on program success (C18). He described his district's remediation program as positive in character with an emphasis on "teachers helping teachers" rather than a mechanism to terminate the employment of weak teachers.

Principal Evaluation

Districts in our sample were also revising the procedures they used to evaluate principals. Several different techniques were used.

Management by objectives: One common form of principal evaluation begins by setting a number of specific performance objectives that principals are to reach over the school year (C7,C8,C21,N1, N2,U7,U8). In the districts using this type of evaluation procedure, it was common for objectives to be established during the summer prior to the start of the year, or at the beginning of the year, and for a formal performance review to take place at the end of the school year (C7,C8,N1,N2,U7). Some districts also included interim meetings during the school year to check for progress in attaining objectives (C7,U7).

Clinical supervision: One district in our sample adopted the practice of clinical supervision, widely used with teachers, in order to supervise principals (C21). In this district, an assistant superintendent responsible for principal evaluation observed principals evaluating teachers as a means to assess principals' competence in this function. Feedback was then provided to the principals as a means of professional development.

Remediation programs: Other districts, particularly those that had developed teacher remediation programs, used a similar program with principals judged to be performing below adequate standards (C5,C18,U8). These programs were similar in structure to teacher remediation programs. Assistance was provided to the principal in question by assigning a qualified staff member to develop a program for improvement. At the end of a designated time period, the principal's performance would be reassessed and a decision made about continued employment. An option for another period of assistance was made available in cases where improvement was demonstrated, but minimum standards not met.

School Effectiveness

A final area of evaluation recently undertaken by districts in our sample was the assessment of school effectiveness. The most common form of school assessment was the survey. Districts used questionnaires, interviews, and other survey research methods to obtain measures of attitudes, interests and beliefs thought to affect the instructional program. Several respondents stated that surveys were performed annually to obtain feedback from teachers, students, and parents on the instructional program and school morale (C4,C9,C18). In some districts, questionnaire items were tailored to reflect items from recent research on school effectiveness and these instruments were used to obtain information about how schools were performing in terms of these indicators as well as to inform staff about the new research (C4,C15).

Analysis and Discussion

Among the school districts in our survey, there was a clear tendency to stress the formative rather than summative aspects of supervision and evaluation. For example, testing systems were designed to provide information that could be used to diagnose problems and make improvements in instructional programs rather than to evaluate schools. Moreover, in many districts, careful attention was being given to training teachers and principals in the use of testing systems for instructional improvement. A similar pattern was evident in patterns of teacher and principal supervision. The method of clinical supervision being implemented in many districts stresses the formative nature of evaluation, with the result that supervisory practices are designed to "coach" rather than evaluate personnel. Finally, even when programs are designed to "get tough" with those teachers and principals performing below expectations, ample opportunity for improvement is provided and assistance from qualified trainers is a central feature of the program.

Implementation Strategies: Testing Programs

In this section, we turn to the strategies districts use to implement testing programs. In the next section, we discuss implementation of programs for the supervision and evaluation of teachers and principals.

Timelines

The districts in our sample took between one and six years to implement new testing programs. A major factor in the time it took for implementation was the type of test the testing system was based on. Clearly, the use of standardized achievement tests as a foundation of district testing programs can reduce the length of time required to implement a new program. Districts can purchase commercially published tests and therefore do not need to invest time in test design and development. It should be noted, however, that standardized tests still require districts to make thoughful choices. Districts in our sample, for example, spent a period of time considering which of the many available tests was best "aligned" to their curricula and thus best reflected the objectives of their local curricula (C1,C15,U3).

The implementation of CRT systems, by comparison, took a considerable amount of time. One district in our survey took six years to develop and implement its CRT program (N1). Another district required four years and is still in the process of enlarging the program (N7). Finally, a district that developed a CRT system as it was developing a new curriculum, and which used the CRTs for diagnosis and placement of students, took three years to implement this new program (U4).

The number of subjects tested and the amount of previous experience in test development appear to be factors that influence the amount of time required to implement criterion-referenced testing programs. For example, a district in our survey that limited test design and development to a single subject was able to implement its program in a single year (U7). This district elected to phase its CRT program in slowly, and it began by developing tests to be used in the reading program. In fact, this pattern was common among districts in our survey. Most began by developing testing programs in basic skills areas and concentrated on tests related to the elementary school instructional program (N1,U3,U4). Once a system of test design and development was established for one subject area, this system could then be applied as tests were developed for other areas (C7).

Design Phase

In the sections that follow, we focus attention on the implementation of CRT systems, since these systems require districts to engage in extensive design and implementation activities.

Search: The choice of a test and a procedure for developing the test was often proceeded by an examination of testing programs in other districts (N7,U3,U4). Some districts involved teachers and other professional staff at this stage of development and created task forces or committees that examined options for the design of testing programs (N1,N7). In other districts, however, the search process was limited. This occurred when an individual--the superintendent or a key district administrator--came to the district with experience using a particular model of testing, and, in some cases, a clear mandate from the board to implement this model (C7,C15).

Design and test construction: In many districts, a committee or task force was used to design and construct tests (C7,C19,N7). Participants in these committees usually included district testing specialists, administrators, and teachers representing different grade levels and subject areas. In all cases, test development was linked closely to curriculum reform. Thus, test development was simply part of a larger reform process that also included the specification of new learning objectives and the selection of new instructional materials (C1,C6,C7,N1,N7,U3,U4).

The primary task during the design phase is to construct test items which reflect district curricular objectives. In some cases, districts used their own personnel to construct items. But in other cases, outside consultants and commerical test banks were used, and appropriate test items were adopted from these sources (N7). Another alternative pursued by one district in our survey was participation in a consortium of school districts (U3).

Costs: The major expense associated with test development is salaries. These go to substitutes when teachers are given release time to participate in district committees, to teachers

in the form of compensation for participation on committees, or to district specialists and coordinators when existing staffing patterns must be changed (C7,C15). Although districts reported considerable variation in the costs associated with CRT development, it is our impression that district-level test development is labor-intensive, time-consuming and potentially costly, especially when "participatory" styles of decision-making that encourage broad staff participation are used to develop test items locally.

Field Testing

A number of districts in our survey field tested CRTs after they were developed and prior to the formal implementation of a testing program (C7,N1,N7). Field testing can be used to screen out poorly constructed test items, to gauge the amount of time needed for test administration, to uncover test items which instructional staff feel are not properly "aligned" to instructional materials or activities, and to develop appropriate procedures for test administration.

Implementation

Once field tests have been conducted and problems with test items and administration dealt with, districts can implement testing programs on a larger scale.

Training: Most districts trained teachers and administrators in the administration and analysis of tests. However, this was accomplished with varying degrees of intensity. In some districts, principals were the key link in training. They received short training sessions in test administration and interpretation and then were given the responsibility of training school staff (C1,N1, N7). Other districts incoporated the use of testing programs into their staff development training, considering this element of instructional improvement in conjunction with other aspects of school improvement. For example, in one district, school leadership teams are being trained in school-level planning techniques that can be used to improve instructional programs (C21). In another district, which uses CRTs in its individualized instructional program, teachers are provided with intensive workshops on how to select a proper CRT and incorporate it into the instructional program (U4).

Management information systems: One of the most interesting developments among districts in our survey was the use of computerized management information systems to record test results (C1,C7,C19,N7,U4). The data generated by testing systems were entered into these computerized systems and used for planning and evaluation purposes at numerous levels of the school systems. For example, all of the systems in districts in our survey provided information about individual student achievement. Printouts noting which instructional objectives students had mastered were periodically given to teachers or used in parent conferences. Achievement data were also aggregated to provide information on the proportions

of students who had mastered target objectives in classrooms, at particular grade levels within schools, or in the district as a whole. The generation and distribution of these data were often controlled by the district office because the production of summary reports required the powerful capacity of the district's mainframe computer, and the aggregated data were used for quarterly and year-end assessments of the instructional program (C1,C19,N1).

Analysis and Discussion

The data on implementation of criterion-referenced testing systems indicates that the development of these systems is both costly and time-consuming. In light of this, districts should take care to avoid two potential pitfalls which may limit the use of such systems. The first pitfall is careless development. Virtually all of the districts using such systems noted that problems arise when these tests are first administered. Test items must be screened, details of test administration ironed out, and the timing of test administration carefully chosen. Poor test items, testing procedures that cannot be understood by students, and tests which are administered before teachers have delivered appropriate instruction were common pitfalls that districts in our survey attempted to avoid through field testing. Moreover, since the development of both CRTs and computerized instructional management systems is costly, careful attention should be given to training staff members in their use. This involves training staff in the use of CRT results to shape classroom instruction and to individualize attention to students. It also involves training in how to use CRT results to evaluate the success of instructional programs. It was our impression that few districts provided intensive training in this latter aspect of using CRT systems, although there were some notable exceptions (C21,N1).

Implementation Strategies: Supervision and Evaluation of Instructional Staff

In this section, we turn to the implementation of programs of staff supervision and evaluation.

Design

There were three primary sources of ideas for programs in staff supervision and evaluation. One common source of ideas came from information shared among colleagues or gained at professional meetings (C8,C20,N2). A second source of ideas was resource centers sponsored by county and state agencies (C20). Finally, some administrators used professional and academic literature as a source for ideas (C5).

Implementation

Implementation of new supervision practices often was accomplished through staff development programs. In many districts, staff development resources were directed toward the delivery of a

uniform program of training in clinical supervision and effective teaching (C6,C8,C20,C21,U8). In the initial phase of these programs, principals and a core group of teachers were trained in these skills. In the next step, two to five day workshops were offered to teachers.

There were three main purposes to these programs. First, the programs gave a number of staff, including both principals and selected teachers, the skills needed to supervise and coach teachers. Second, the programs established a common language that could be used to discuss the improvement of teaching techniques (C8,C20). And finally, as more and more teachers entered the staff development programs, a climate of trust in supervisory relations was established (C21).

As these training efforts occurred, district administrators began to change the criteria by which principals were evaluated to reflect the skills learned in staff development programs. In some districts, principals were required to engage in practices related to clinical supervision and to show evidence of this during their performance reviews (U8). In other districts, no formal demands were made, but administrators made clear to principals that this was an expectation that must be met (C21).

While staff development programs often created a climate favorable to classroom observations of teachers, they seldom led to a revision of the formal criteria by which teachers were evaluated. The development of formal criteria for teacher evaluation are controlled by state laws and collective bargaining agreements, and changes in formal criteria are difficult to make. Thus, only two districts in our sample discussed revising observation forms used in formal teacher evaluations to more closely reflect the skills taught in staff development programs, and neither of these districts had actually implemented a policy of this sort (C8,N2). However, one district in our sample did formally negotiate a contract provision that allowed it to increase the number of times teachers were formally evaluated (C6).

Teacher remediation programs bore some similarities to programs focusing on clinical supervision, but, since these programs can lead to teacher dismissal, their implementation is much more formal in character and much more dependent upon negotiations with teachers' unions or associations. Three districts in our sample attempted to implement teacher remediation programs (C5,C18,U8), but only two succeeded (C18,U8).

The key to successful implementation of these programs was the state of labor-management relations in the district. In one district, a favorable climate for negotiations led to a swift change in contract provisions concerning teacher evaluation (U8). In a second district, where the labor relations climate was less favorable, the teachers' union took the position that contract negotiations were necessary for the implementation of a teacher

remediation program, and district administrators were reluctant to engage in this process (C5). In a third district, administrators moved very slowly in implementing the program. During the design phase, a key district administrator was a former negotiator for the teacher organization, and respected teachers, "opinion makers" as one informant called them, were placed on a district task force chosen to investigate the possibility of designing a remediation program within the district (C18). This strategy resulted in successful adoption of a remediation program.

A next stage in implementation was the selection of "remediation specialists" who would aid teachers chosen for the program. In one district, remediation specialists were recruited from among the district's curriculum staff (U8). In the other district, nominations were solicited from among the teaching staff and nearly 80 individuals were selected to become specialists, although only about 15 of these have actually been used (C18). In both districts, specialists were then provided with training in the skills needed to work with teachers during the remediation process. In both cases, this training was provided by university staff and involved training in a wide variety of interpersonal and supervisory skills (C18,U8).

Analysis and Discussion

It is clear that changes in the formal evaluation of teachers take place in a highly-charged atmosphere and are difficult to accomplish without strong support from teacher organizations. It is interesting to note, however, that this is not the case for evaluation of principals. Lacking the powerful support of a large organization, principals are much more vulnerable to changes in evaluation practices. Thus, in many of the districts in which we interviewed, new staff development thrusts had led to a change in the formal criteria by which principals were evaluated, but not to a change in teacher evaluation practices. Moreover, in one district that could not successfully implement a teacher remediation program, a program of principal remediation was successfully implemented.

Because of the politically-charged context of formal evaluation, many districts concentrate on revising supervisory practices rather than formal evaluation practices. Because such reforms are carried out in the name of staff development, revised supervisory practices can be implemented without resort to formal contract negotiations. Instead, the successful implementation of clinical supervision practices relies on the interest of many teachers in improving their own instructional skills, and on the establishment of a favorable climate of trust and mutual understanding among teachers and supervisors.

Problems Encountered by Districts

In this section, we consider the problems district-faced as they revised their procedures for supervision and evaluation. Our

discussion centers on two major areas: testing programs and procedures for supervision and evaluation of staff.

Problems with Testing Programs

In virtually every district that implemented a new CRT system, problems emerged. The most pervasive problem was "fear" and "resistence" on the part of teachers and principals (C1,C7,N1,N7,U4). This was motivated by the fact that such testing systems can provide data which can be used to evaluate teachers and principals on the basis of student performance (C1,C7,N1,N7,U4). In one district, teacher resistence was initially very high, and the teacher organization sued the district to prevent the system from being used to evaluate teachers (N1). Most districts worked hard to overcome this problem by assuring teachers that such systems were not being used for evaluation and by stressing the benefits of such systems for diagnosing problems in the instructional program.

Teachers expressed other concerns about CRT-based testing systems. Many felt that districts' use of CRTs to monitor instructional outcomes increased the amount of paperwork they were required to do (C1,C7,N1). In one district where we conducted a site visit, teachers also objected to the multiple-choice scoring system used to assess students' writing skills and to the timing of the year-end CRT, which they felt was given too early in the year (N1). Districts attempted to circumvent some of these problems by field testing CRTs and by continually working to develop better test items (C7). Others attempted to minimize paperwork by computerizing their management information systems (C1).

Problems with Supervision and Evaluation Systems

Districts that attempted to institute teacher remediation programs experienced a number of problems. In the districts that attempted such programs, the power of teacher organizations had to be recognized, and successful implementation was highly dependent on a favorable climate of labor-management relations. But even after such programs were instituted, other problems remained. In both of the districts that implemented these programs, respondents noted that principals were reluctant to single teachers out for remediation (C18,U8). As one respondent noted, principals, like everyone else, don't like to be seen as "bad guys" (U8). Respondents also noted that the quality of human relations often deteriorated during the remediation process. Districts attempted to resolve these problems by creating a supportive context within which the program could function. One district portrayed the program as "teachers helping teachers" (C18), and another district attempted to make principals see that they were "not alone" in the remediation process (U8).

Nevertheless, given the potentially volatile problems associated with teacher remediation programs, it is easy to see why clinical supervision and staff development programs were chosen as the major means of improving teaching in most districts.

Yet these programs suffered many of the same problems. A number of respondents noted that some principals had a hard time adopting their new role as "clinical" supervisors (C21,U7), and others noted that pockets of resistence developed within the teaching staff (C20). Districts attempted to rectify such situations by building a core or cadre of committed staff members within each building. This core group, sometimes a district-appointed leadership team (C21), other times a group of teachers who were the first to be trained (C8), worked to build a climate that led to frequent and open observation and supervision of teaching.

Analysis and Discussion

The most striking feature of supervision and evaluation in schools is its use for formative rather than summative evaluation. Given the uncertain nature of teaching and learning, it is difficult to be critical of this tendency. But it also must be acknowledged that teachers and principals often actively resist innovations that have the potential to strengthen supervision and evaluation. Because of this, districts attempting to do more in the way of evaluation are forced to "tread softly." What they are unable to do in the context of formal evaluation, they attempt to do in an informal and less threatening context. Test data are used for formative evaluations of the instructional program, or to place students in instructional groups, but not to judge teaching effectiveness. And classroom observations, when performed more frequently, are seen as ways of "coaching" teachers and fostering a climate receptive to instructional improvement, while the criteria that define good teaching in these observations often remain unconnected to the formal criteria by which staff are evaluated.

APPENDIX A

PARTICIPANT INDEX

PARTICIPANT INDEX
(Alphabetically by state and school district)

CALIFORNIA

C1 **Alum Rock Union Elementary School District**
2930 Gay Av.
San Jose, CA 95127
(408) 258-4923

(K-8; Enrollment 13,857)

William J. Jefferds
Superintendent

Walter J. Symons
Deputy Superintendent

James O'Berg
Principal
Hubbard Elementary School

C2 **Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District**
1025 Delaware St.
Fairfield, CA 94533
(707) 422-3200

(K-12; Enrollment 13,655)

Ernest Moretti
Assistant Superintendent
Instruction

C3 **Fresno Unified School District**
Education Center
Tulare and M Streets
Fresno, CA 93721
(209) 441-3000

(K-12; Enrollment 55,492)

John Stremple
Superintendent

Jerry Phillips
Assistant Superintendent
Elementary Education

C4 **Jefferson Union High School District**
699 Serramonte Blvd., Suite 100
Daly City, CA 94015
(415) 756-0300

(9-12; Enrollment 5,150)

Floyd Gonella
Superintendent

Thomas Fitzpatrick
Coordinator
Renewal Program

C5 **Marysville Joint Unified School District**
1919 B St.
Marysville, CA 95901
(916) 742-5501

(K-12; Enrollment 9,910)

George Smith
Superintendent

Leonard Larson
Assistant Superintendent
Personnel

C6 **Milpitas Unified School District**
1331 E. Calaveras Blvd.
Milpitas, CA 95035
(408) 945-2300

(K-12; Enrollment 7,688)

John K.H. Mackay
Superintendent

George Brallier
Director
Dept. of Instruction

C7 **Modesto City High School District**
426 Locust St.
Modesto, CA 95351
(209) 576-4011

(K-12; Enrollment 20,160)

Robert C. Otto
Superintendent

Rita Roberts
Supervisor
Curriculum Development

C8 **Moraga Elementary School District**
P.O. Box 158
Moraga, CA 94556
(415) 376-5943

(K-8; Enrollment 1,493)

Judith R. Glickman
Superintendent

C9 **Moreland Elementary School District**
4170 Campbell Av.
San Jose, CA 95130
(408) 379-1370

(K-8; Enrollment 3,621)

Robert W. Reasoner
Superintendent

C10 **Napa Valley Unified School District**
2425 Jefferson St.
Napa, CA 94558
(707) 252-5511

(K-12; Enrollment 15,057)

Ed Solomon
Assoc. Superintendent
Instruction (retired)

Suzanne Kulas
Administrator
Elementary Education

C11 **Nevada Joint Union High School District**
11645 Ridge Rd.
Grass Valley, CA 95945
(916) 273-3351

(9-12; Enrollment 3,033)

Michael D. Barkhurst
Superintendent

Earle Conway
Principal
Sierra Mountain High School

C12 **Northern Humboldt Union High School District**
905 Sixth St.
Arcata, CA 95521
(707) 822-4821

(9-12; Enrollment 1,481)

Edwin L. Oliveira
Superintendent

David Duran, Principal
McKinleyville High School

C13 **Oakland Unified School District**
1025 Second Av.
Oakland, CA 94606
(415) 836-8200

(K-12; Enrollment 50,480)

J. David Bowick
Superintendent

William Gonsalves
Consulting Principal
PRIDE Program

C14 **Pajaro Valley Unified School District**
P.O. Box 630
Watsonville, CA 95076
(408) 728-6230

(K-12; Enrollment 13,038)

James S. Baker
Superintendent

C15 **San Benito Joint Union High School District**
1220 Monterey St.
Hollister, CA 95023
(408) 637-5831

(9-12; Enrollment 1,388)

Greg Hearn
Superintendent

Tim Shellito
Curriculum Coordinator

C16 **San Carlos Elementary School District**
826 Chestnut St.
San Carlos, CA 94070
(415) 593-7626

(K-8; Enrollment 1,696)

James W. Stanfill
Superintendent

C17 **San Juan Unified School District**
3738 Walnut Av.
Carmichael, CA 95608
(916) 484-2011

(K-12; Enrollment 43,703)

Fred J. Stewart
Superintendent

Ella DeLeon
Acting Director
Staff Development Projects

C18 **Santa Clara Unified School District**
P.O. Box 397
Santa Clara, CA 95052
(408) 985-6000

(K-12: 14,190)

Rudy R. Gatti
Superintendent

Nicholas R. Gervase
Assistant Superintendent
Personnel Services

C19 **Sonoma Valley Unified School District**
721 W. Napa St.
Sonoma, CA 95476
(707) 938-8545

(K-12: Enrollment 3,858)

Robert A. Geurts
Superintendent

C20 **Vacaville Unified School District**
751 School St.
Vacaville, CA 95688
(707) 446-6880

(K-12: Enrollment 9,082)

Robert L. Brickman
Superintendent

James Franco, Principal
Ulatis Elementary School

C21 **Vallejo City Unified School District**
211 Valle Vista
Vallejo, CA 94590
(707) 644-8921

(K-12: Enrollment 16,241)

B. Phillip Bowman
Superintendent

Joan McDonald
Administrator
Instructional Services

Judy Guilkey-Amado
Director
Professional Development

Francine Belkind
Director
Professional Development
Center

NEVADA

N1 **Clark County School District**
2832 E. Flamingo Rd.
Las Vegas, NV 89121
(702) 736-5310

(K-12: Enrollment 89,258)

Robert Wentz
Superintendent

Theron Swainston
Associate Superintendent

N2 **Douglas County School District**
P.O. Box 1888
Minden, NV 89423
(702) 782-5134

(K-12; Enrollment 3,676)

F. Gregory Betts
Superintendent

Thomas Covalt
Assistant Superintendent

N3 **Elko County School District**
P.O. Box 1012
Elko, NV 89801
(702) 738-5196

(K-12; Enrollment 4,158)

Charles H. Knight
Superintendent

N4 **Humboldt County School District**
P.O. Box 1070
Winnemucca, NV 89445
(702) 623-4467

(K-12; Enrollment 2,249)

Robert Scott
Superintendent

N5 **Lander County School District**
P.O. Box 1300
Battle Mountain, NV 89820
(702) 635-2886

(K-12; Enrollment 1,093)

Leon Hensley
Superintendent

N6 **Lyon County School District**
25 East Goldfield Av.
Yerington, NV 89447
(702) 463-2205

(K-12; Enrollment 3,027)

Barton W. Welsh
Superintendent

N7 **Washoe County School District**
425 E. Ninth St.
Reno, NV 89520
(702) 322-7041

(K-12; Enrollment 31,181)

Marvin Moss
Superintendent

Richard Wright
Director
Administrative Services

UTAH

U1 **Davis School District**
45 East State St.
Farmington, UT 84025
(801) 451-1251

(K-12; Enrollment 42,123)

Lawrence E. Welling
Superintendent

U2 **Grand School District**
264 South 4th East
Moab, UT 84532
(801) 259-6212

(K-12; Enrollment 1,784)

Bill B. Meador
Superintendent

Barbara Ing
Director
Teacher Center

U3 **Granite School District**
340 East 3545 South
Salt Lake City, UT 84115
(801) 268-8111

(K-12; Enrollment 64,345)

John Reed Call
Superintendent

Beverly Cook
Inservice Coordinator

U4 **Jordan School District**
9361 South 4th East
Sandy, UT 84070
(801) 566-1521

(K-12; Enrollment 53,468)

Raymond W. Whittenburg
Superintendent

L. Ray Brown
Deputy Superintendent
Educational Services

JoAnn Seghini
Director
Curriculum Development

U5 **Logan School District**
101 West Center
Logan, UT 84321
(801) 752-1811

(K-12; Enrollment 4,171)

James C. Blair
Superintendent

U6 **Ogden School District**
2444 Adams Av.
Ogden, UT 84401
(801) 399-3456

(K-12; Enrollment 11,964)

William L. Garner
Superintendent

Ernest M. Kendrick
Principal
Mound Fort Middle School

U7 **Provo School District**
280 West 940 North
Provo, UT 84601
(801) 373-6301

(K-12; Enrollment 10,996)

John W. Bennion
Superintendent

James G. Bergera
Assistant Superintendent
Curriculum Instruction

U8 **Salt Lake City School District**
440 East 1st South
Salt Lake City, UT 84111
(801) 322-1471

(K-12; Enrollment 24,293)

Donald Thomas
Superintendent

Boyd M. Pexton
Director Specialist
Evaluation, Remediation,
Termination Program

U9 **Tooele School District**
66 West Vine
Tooele, UT 84074
(801) 882-3030

(K-12; Enrollment 6,998)

James R. Gowans
Assistant Superintendent

Martell Menlove
Principal
Stansbury Elementary

U10 **Washington School District**
189 West Tabernacle
St. George, UT 84770
(801) 673-3553

(K-12; Enrollment 7,150)

Steven H. Peterson
Administrator
Secondary Education

U11 **Weber School District**
1122 Washington Blvd.
Ogden, UT 84404
(801) 394-8873

(K-12; Enrollment 21,851)

Jay B. Taggart
Superintendent

Tim Chatelain
Principal
South Ogden Junior High
School